

VIETNAM:

(Continued from Page A1)

ture student Maya Ying Lin. The fact that an Asian woman had designed the memorial drew cries of outrage from some veterans.

"Yeah, there was some racism involved," said Bowman, who was working in a Vietnam Era Veterans Outreach Center at the time. "I heard a lot of it."

To silence some of the criticism, a more traditional 7-foot bronze statue of three heroic servicemen and a flagpole were added to the memorial in 1984.

That touched off another contro-

versy. Women who served in Vietnam demanded to know why a woman was not included in that grouping.

Egan said women will dedicate a statue at the site next year.

"It's taken a long time to cut through the red tape to get it done, but it's getting done," he said.

Jim Burns, a spokesman for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, said he thinks most of the controversy began because people could not really envision The Wall when they looked at two-dimensional drawings.

"But when it was dedicated, when people could see it and touch it and feel the names in three dimensions, the controversy end-

ed," he said.

"It is now considered holy ground, which is why we felt it was appropriate to have a 10th-anniversary celebration and why so many are coming to be a part of it," Burns said. He estimates that 200,000 people will attend the celebration.

The highlight is the reading of the names on the memorial. That started at noon Sunday and will continue around the clock until 9 a.m. Wednesday. More than 1,000 volunteers from all over the country will read the names.

"That's the first time that's ever been done at The Wall," Burns said.